

find some reasonable middle ground. The proposal is not as stringent and I think is considerably more reasonable than original proposals which Senator Higgins has worked on. I think the bill will have a significant effect in the long term upon improving the quality of care in the nursing homes throughout the State of Nebraska and I applaud Senator Higgins for her effort and urge you to support LB 235 in the form that Senator Higgins and the Health and Welfare Committee presented it to us.

PRESIDENT: Senator Hefner.

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President and members of the body, I think Senator Higgins has very good intentions with this bill but it is still a little bit too restrictive for me to support at this stage. She mentioned in her explanation of the bill that we are doing most of these things with state...or through the Department of Health rules and regulations now and of course I did support the committee amendments. I think it is a little bit better and it is a more workable bill but I think we have got to be careful that we don't put too many regulations on these nursing homes. I visited nearly every one of the nursing homes in my legislative district and they are doing a fantastic job. I don't see how they could improve any more. They have very faithful and dedicated employees and I just haven't received any complaints from any of the members that are in these homes. I think we need to be careful that we don't put an unbearable load on the nursing homes in Nebraska because if we do this we are going to increase the cost. The administrators and employees of these homes spend a lot of time with the state inspectors now and I think if we put more restrictions on them we are going to need more inspectors out there and of course, these employees will have to spend more time with them. When they are spending time with these inspectors they cannot do the other work that they are hired to do. This would be, or I feel this would be an extra expense to the home and of course it would also be an extra expense to the state. I don't know what the fiscal impact will be since we have adopted the committee amendments but I will imagine there will still be some kind of an increase. I say to you here this morning I feel we have too many government regulations. I think we ought to be taking some of them off rather than adding to our regulations.

PRESIDENT: There is an amendment on the desk.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Lowell Johnson would move to amend the bill. Would you like me to read it, Senator? Okay. Mr. President, the amendment would read as follows: (Read Johnson amendment as found on page 806 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT: Senator Johnson.

SENATOR L. JOHNSON: Mr. President, members of the Legislature,